



CHURCH OF CEYLON

DIOCESE OF COLOMBO



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Bishop of Colombo

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Statement by Rt. Rev. Dhiloraj Canagasabey, Bishop of Colombo, Church of Ceylon on the 16 Days of Activism against Gender based Violence

Today marks the International day for the elimination of violence against women and the start of the 16 days of activism against Gender based Violence.

The World Wide Anglican Communion, as part of the global civil society, is involved in this campaign of 16 Days of Activism against Gender based Violence.

Each year, more and more Anglican churches and dioceses, including the Church of Ceylon, are using the 16 days of activism "to break the silence, challenge harmful attitudes and engage women and men in taking action to prevent and end gender based violence."

In Sri Lanka, gender based violence ranges from sexual harassment in public spaces to acts of violence within the privacy of the home or at workplaces. The environment of political turmoil and conflict in the country has been a significant contribution to the increase in gender based violence. The almost three decade long war in the North and East and the culture of violence around the country has created an environment in which women and girls continue to suffer disproportionately. Incidences of rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence, forced prostitution and media violence all prevail in Sri Lankan society. In addition discriminatory laws and policies violate the rights and freedom of women and girls. This is set in the background of socio cultural structures where patriarchy is constant in the private and public sphere.

The Church of Ceylon joins in solidarity with the global community and Sri Lankan civil society groups in expressing concern on the prevalence of violence against women. An end to this would begin with efforts and actions by the individual, the family, the community and governance structures.

My prayer is that we will work collectively for a Sri Lanka which respects and protects women and girls.

Dhiloraj R. Canagasabey

Rt. Revd Dhiloraj R. Canagasabey
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